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Part three

From Military Conflict to Geopolitical Transition:

Redefining Power, Resistance, and Global Order in the Middle East after the Iran–US–Israel Confrontation

Victory, Diplomacy, and the Future of the Global Order

After the Crisis: From Military Confrontation to the Question of the Future

After moving beyond the military phase, the confrontation between Iran, the United States, and Israel raises a more fundamental question than merely assessing the immediate outcomes of military operations and the extent of the damage inflicted: Has the use of military power succeeded in resolving the underlying problem, or has it only created a new stage in a prolonged and complex crisis?

The importance of this question lies in the fact that the crisis among these three actors is not limited to a single dispute. Iran's nuclear programme and related sanctions, the United States' military presence in the region and Washington's efforts to maintain its strategic influence over the Persian Gulf, energy resources, and their transportation routes, Israel's security claims in relation to its expansionist policies, Iran's concerns regarding the expansion of Israeli influence and American interventions, Tehran's relations with regional actors, and the broader question of the future of the Middle East's political and security order are all interconnected within a complex network of security competition and geopolitical rivalry.

Therefore, even if one side achieves certain successes on the battlefield, such success does not necessarily represent a fundamental resolution of the crisis. Military operations may target specific facilities, infrastructure, or capabilities and impose costs on the opposing side; however, they cannot by themselves eliminate historical disputes, conflicting security perceptions, geopolitical rivalries, and deep mistrust among the actors involved.

Although some of these factors were examined in greater detail in the second part of this article, this section approaches the issue from a different perspective: once the limitations of military instruments have become evident, what pathways remain available for managing the crisis?

This question does not imply ignoring the importance of military power or the role of deterrence. On the contrary, the experience of the crisis demonstrates that military power remains one of the significant elements of international politics. Nevertheless, such power can only produce sustainable outcomes when it is ultimately transformed into a viable and durable political framework. Otherwise, the use of force may not bring an end to the crisis but instead create a new cycle of attack, retaliation, deterrence, sanctions, and confrontation.

This is where the central issue of the third part begins: Will the future of the Iran–US–Israel crisis once again be shaped by the logic of military confrontation, or is there a possibility of moving towards diplomacy, mutual understanding, and the creation of new security arrangements?

The answer to this question does not depend solely on the decisions of the three main actors. The future trajectory of the crisis will also be influenced by regional developments, the role of major powers, energy market conditions, the Palestinian issue, the future of Iran's relations with Arab countries, and broader transformations in the structure of the international system.

For this reason, the third part of the article does not begin by revisiting the question of “who was more successful on the battlefield”; rather, it addresses a more fundamental question: After the crisis, what type of political and security order can prevent its repetition?

Within this framework, the possibilities and limitations of post-crisis diplomacy must first be examined, because any future agreement, understanding, or security arrangement will face deep mistrust that has developed over decades among Iran, the United States, and Israel.

It must then be considered whether issues such as Iran’s nuclear programme, sanctions, Gulf security, the Palestinian issue, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen can be managed separately, or whether all of these challenges form part of a broader security and geopolitical equation in the Middle East.

Ultimately, the central question is whether the current crisis will merely result in a return to the pre-war situation, or whether the changes created in regional and international relations will provide the foundation for the emergence of a new order—an order in which no single power can independently determine the future rules of the Middle East.

Diplomacy after the Crisis and the Limitations of Military Solutions

Under such circumstances, diplomacy should not be viewed as an immediate substitute for military power; rather, it should be understood as a mechanism for transforming power and pressure into sustainable political arrangements. Whenever security crises continue without a clear political pathway, the possibility of renewed conflict and the return of cycles of violence increases.

One of the most significant challenges of Middle Eastern crises is the gap between the temporary end of hostilities and the genuine resolution of disputes. A cessation of attacks or the achievement of a temporary agreement does not necessarily mean the end of a crisis. If the fundamental causes of disagreement, conflicting security perceptions, and the core concerns of the parties involved remain unresolved, any agreement may become merely a temporary pause in a much longer competition.

From this perspective, effective diplomacy must pursue at least three objectives simultaneously:

- reducing the immediate risk of the expansion of war;

- establishing mechanisms for managing security disputes;
- creating conditions for dialogue on long-term issues that constitute the main sources of mistrust.

For this reason, any sustainable solution requires a multilayered approach. Attempts to resolve a single issue without considering the other dimensions of the crisis may lead to a temporary reduction in tensions, but they do not necessarily create lasting security. For example, an agreement focused solely on limiting Iran's nuclear capabilities, without addressing the security concerns of the various parties, is unlikely to resolve all dimensions of the rivalry. On the other hand, attempting to resolve all disputes simultaneously may make the negotiation process excessively complex and politically difficult.

Therefore, one of the central challenges of future diplomacy is finding a balance between step-by-step negotiations and a comprehensive security framework. Gradual negotiations can provide opportunities for incremental confidence-building, while a broader security framework can prevent temporary agreements from becoming fragile and unsustainable solutions.

In this context, the issue of trust is of fundamental importance. The experience of previous agreements has demonstrated that even reaching a political agreement alone does not guarantee its durability. Changes in governments, shifts in domestic policies, disagreements over the interpretation of commitments, and the absence of effective mechanisms for monitoring and implementing agreements can make diplomatic achievements vulnerable.

Therefore, any future agreement among the parties involved must include not only political commitments but also clear mechanisms for monitoring, verification, and enforcement. Without such mechanisms, agreements may become less a means of resolving crises and more a temporary stage in a new cycle of mistrust.

Nevertheless, historical experience demonstrates that the absence of trust should not be interpreted as a reason to abandon diplomacy. On the contrary, the deeper the level of mistrust, the greater the need for communication channels and diplomatic mechanisms. When opposing parties view each other as fundamental threats to their security, even limited channels of communication can help prevent misperceptions, miscalculations, and unintended escalation of crises.

From this perspective, diplomacy in the Middle East is important not only for achieving major agreements but also for managing disputes and preventing every

crisis from developing into a broader war. Sustainable security will only become possible when regional and global powers accept that none of them can define all security issues of the region solely according to their own interests.

The Iran–United States–Israel crisis raises a fundamental question from this perspective: Can security be sustainably achieved through the continuous expansion of one side’s military capabilities while increasing the other side’s sense of insecurity?

The experience of international relations demonstrates that security based solely on increasing one actor’s capabilities while reducing another actor’s security will ultimately produce cycles of competition and mistrust. Sustainable security requires political arrangements in which the security concerns of all parties, even amid continuing disagreements, are placed within a manageable framework.

Therefore, the future of the Middle East will not depend solely on the outcome of a single war or a specific agreement; rather, it will depend on whether regional actors and major powers can move beyond the logic of “absolute victory” and “absolute defeat” and move towards mechanisms in which reducing tensions, preserving national independence, and creating mutual security are recognised as shared interests.

Security of the Persian Gulf and the Necessity of Regional Security Arrangements

One of the most important factors determining the future of the crisis is the avoidance by the United States and Israel of threats and the use of force against Iran, as the continuation of such an approach directly affects the security of the Persian Gulf and the stability of the region.

The Strait of Hormuz, as one of the world’s most important energy transit routes, holds a central position in this equation. Any escalation of military tensions around this waterway could have consequences extending beyond the borders of regional states and could affect energy prices, maritime transportation, global markets, and the economies of energy-consuming countries.

For this reason, the security of the Persian Gulf cannot be guaranteed solely through the military presence of external powers. The presence of US forces and other foreign military actors may serve a deterrent role in the short term; however, at the same time, from the perspective of some regional actors, it may also be

regarded as part of the security dilemma itself. When an external power relies on a significant military presence to maintain regional security, its presence may be interpreted by its rivals as a threat to their own security.

This situation represents the same security dilemma in which an action taken by one actor with the intention of increasing its own security may be perceived by another actor as a threat, thereby contributing to arms competition, growing mistrust, and escalating tensions.

From this perspective, one of the fundamental questions for the future is whether the security of the Persian Gulf should continue to rely primarily on the presence of external powers, or whether regional states can move towards more inclusive and independent security arrangements.

A stable regional security system does not necessarily mean the end of all disagreements among regional states. Political, religious, geopolitical, and security differences are likely to continue to exist; however, the existence of disagreements does not in itself make war inevitable. What matters is the creation of mechanisms for managing disputes and preventing every political crisis from turning into military confrontation.

Such arrangements could include the establishment of direct communication channels, mechanisms for reducing the risk of conflict, agreements concerning maritime security, cooperation in addressing common threats, and frameworks for regular dialogue among regional states.

Nevertheless, creating such a system faces serious obstacles. Deep mistrust among some regional countries, geopolitical rivalries, disagreements over the role of external powers, and unresolved crises all make the establishment of a shared security framework difficult.

However, the difficulty of creating such a system should not be interpreted as evidence of its impossibility. Many security arrangements throughout history have not been created after the complete elimination of disagreements; rather, they were established precisely to manage disputes among states that continued to have different interests, perceptions, and concerns.

From this perspective, the future of Persian Gulf security could move towards a model in which security is based on achieving a balance among regional states, respecting national sovereignty, and developing independent regional security mechanisms. The objective of such a framework would be to manage political and security disputes through dialogue, negotiation, and peaceful mechanisms,

while preventing crises from developing into military confrontation, coercion, and expansionist policies.

The historical experience of the Middle East demonstrates that dependence on external powers for security, if it is not aligned with the genuine interests of the peoples of the region, the principle of political independence, and the avoidance of threats against regional states, including Iran, does not create lasting stability. Instead, it can contribute to geopolitical competition, mistrust, and new crises. Furthermore, the experience of recent decades has shown that even with the extensive presence of numerous US military bases in oil-producing Arab countries, regional security has not been fully guaranteed, and security crises have continued.

Therefore, sustainable security in the Persian Gulf ultimately requires the active participation of regional states and the creation of arrangements based on mutual respect, non-interference, shared responsibility, and preventing intrusive and biased involvement by external powers. In such a framework, maintaining peace and stability in the region should depend primarily on cooperation among regional countries and the constructive role of its key actors, including Iran.

The Attack on Iran and Its Impact on Broader Middle Eastern Crises

One of the main reasons for the difficulty in resolving the crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel is that this confrontation cannot be completely separated from other crises in the Middle East. The Palestinian issue, the situation in Gaza, Israel's relations with Lebanon and Hezbollah, developments in Syria, the war in Yemen, and disputes related to Iran's nuclear programme may appear to be separate issues; however, in practice, they are interconnected within a broader network of security, political, and geopolitical competition.

From the perspective of Israel and the United States, Iran's regional influence and its relations with non-state actors in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen are viewed as part of a wider security network that may create threats to Israeli interests and American forces in the region.

From Iran's perspective, however, these relationships are considered part of its deterrence strategy against external pressure. According to Tehran's view, the experience of previous decades has demonstrated that relying solely on geographical borders and conventional military capabilities cannot, by itself,

guarantee national security in an environment where major powers and regional rivals maintain an active presence.

As a result, each side interprets the regional networks of the other through a different perspective. What one side considers a “resistance network” or a means of creating deterrence may be perceived by the opposing side as a “threat network” or an instrument for expanding regional influence.

This difference in perception is one of the main factors linking regional crises to one another. Any escalation between Iran and Israel could affect Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, just as developments in these countries can influence the security calculations of Tehran, Tel Aviv, and Washington.

Therefore, any attempt to establish lasting security in the region without considering these interconnected dynamics will face serious limitations. It is not realistic to expect one crisis to be fully resolved while related conflicts and tensions continue.

The Palestinian issue occupies a particularly important position in this context. The continuation of the Palestinian crisis and the situation in Gaza are not only humanitarian and political issues in their own right, but also directly influence the security perceptions and political calculations of many regional actors. As long as the Palestinian issue remains one of the major sources of mistrust, tension, and dissatisfaction in the Middle East, the creation of a stable regional security order will continue to face significant challenges.

For this reason, any future framework for Middle Eastern security must recognise the connections among various regional issues, without necessarily placing all of them within a single, simultaneous negotiation process. Some issues may require direct negotiations, others may require step-by-step agreements, and some may only be manageable through regional and international mechanisms.

Such an approach can help avoid two opposing mistakes: first, oversimplifying the crisis and reducing it to a single bilateral dispute; and second, attempting to resolve all regional issues simultaneously through one comprehensive agreement that may be politically unrealistic and unattainable.

Therefore, a realistic solution is unlikely to emerge from one immediate and comprehensive agreement. Rather, it is more likely to develop through a series of interconnected and gradual arrangements, each of which reduces part of the tensions and creates conditions for broader confidence-building over time.

Within such a framework, the future of the Middle East will depend less on a single “final agreement” and more on the ability of regional actors to manage disputes, reduce tensions, and prevent limited crises from escalating into wider wars.

Sanctions, Iran’s Nuclear Programme, and the Issue of International Trust

Among the issues related to the Iran crisis, the country’s nuclear programme remains one of the most significant points of disagreement. From the perspective of the United States and Israel, the main concern centres on the possibility that Iran’s nuclear capabilities could be transformed into military capacity and the consequences this would have for the balance of power in the region. Iran, on the other hand, emphasises its right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and views external pressures as part of an effort to restrict its strategic capabilities and scientific and technological development.

Regardless of these differing interpretations, the experience of recent years has demonstrated that Iran’s nuclear issue is not merely a technical matter. It is directly linked to economic sanctions, regional security, Iran’s relations with major powers, and the future of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. While there is not any concern expressed about the Israeli nuclear capabilities, indicating a double standard policy.

Sanctions have also played a dual role in this context. On the one hand, supporters of sanctions argue that economic pressure can compel to change their behaviour. On the other hand, critics argue that broad sanctions often place the greatest burden on society rather than political structures, increase distrust, and may even strengthen governments’ motivation to develop independent defence, economic, and technological capabilities.

Iran’s experience shows that sanctions alone have not been able to achieve all the political objectives pursued by those imposing them. At the same time, this does not mean that economic pressure has been completely ineffective. Sanctions can impose significant costs; however, imposing costs is not the same as achieving sustainable political change.

From this perspective, one of the major challenges of any future agreement will be creating a balance between concerns related to non-proliferation, the right to peaceful nuclear technology, the security interests of regional countries, and the necessity of reducing economic pressures.

Such an agreement can only be sustainable if the various parties feel that their fundamental interests have not been ignored. An agreement that, from the perspective of one side, is merely an instrument for restricting or imposing the will of the other side is likely to face resistance, distrust, and doubts about its durability.

Furthermore, the experience of previous agreements has shown that the durability of international agreements depends greatly on the credibility of the commitments made by the parties involved. If an agreement can be easily abandoned due to a change of government or a shift in domestic policy by one side, confidence in diplomacy declines, and other parties may conclude that only reliance on their own independent capabilities can guarantee their security.

Therefore, the central issue for the future is not merely achieving a new agreement; rather, it is establishing a mechanism capable of preserving the durability and credibility of such an agreement in the face of political changes. Achieving this objective requires political guarantees, international monitoring, effective verification, and clear mechanisms for resolving disputes.

From this perspective, Iran's nuclear issue represents a broader challenge in international relations: how can a balance be established between power, trust, and international commitments?

The answer to this question is important not only for the future of Iran's relations with the United States and Europe, but also for the future of the nuclear non-proliferation system and the formation of a regional security order in the Middle East.

China, Russia, and the Transition Towards a Multipolar Order

The crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel cannot be analysed separately from the transformations taking place within the structure of the international system. In the past, the Middle East was largely analysed within the framework of competition between the United States and regional powers; however, in recent years, the increasing role of China, Russia, and other non-Western powers has made regional and international dynamics more complex.

This transformation does not mean the immediate end of American influence. The United States continues to possess an extensive network of alliances, military

presence, economic capabilities, and diplomatic influence. Nevertheless, American power no longer operates in a vacuum. The emergence of rival powers and the growing strategic independence of regional actors have gradually moved decision-making about the future of the Middle East away from the exclusive control of a single power.

China, in particular, has expanded its role primarily through economics, trade, energy, and diplomacy. China's dependence on energy resources from the Persian Gulf, extensive trade relations with regional countries, and Beijing's efforts to play a more active role in political mediation demonstrate that stability in the Middle East is not merely a foreign policy issue for China; rather, it is directly connected to its economic security, sustainable growth, and global position.

China's role in regional developments also reflects a change in the way power is exercised within the international system. Unlike models that have traditionally relied mainly on military presence and direct intervention, China has placed greater emphasis on economic relations, investment, trade, and the creation of long-term partnerships. However, this approach is not free from strategic interests, as major powers always shape their foreign relations according to national interests and geopolitical calculations.

Russia, due to its geopolitical position, military capabilities, involvement in certain regional crises, and historical relations with several Middle Eastern countries, remains another important actor in the region. Moscow has sought to maintain relations with various actors and strengthen its position in international affairs through simultaneous engagement with regional and global powers.

Nevertheless, the increasing role of China and Russia should not be interpreted as a complete replacement of one external power by another in the Middle East. The historical experience of the region has shown that complete dependence on any foreign power, whether Western or non-Western, can limit the independent decision-making capacity of regional countries. The fundamental challenge for regional states is to create balance in their foreign relations and preserve their ability to make independent decisions based on national interests.

The growing role of these powers, particularly in energy, trade, technology, and security, indicates that the world is gradually moving towards a structure in which power is distributed among several major centres. However, multipolarity does not necessarily mean the creation of a fairer or more stable order. Competition among several major powers can create new opportunities, but it can also generate new crises and rivalries.

Therefore, the main question is not whether the world will become multipolar or not; rather, the question is how this transition will be managed.

If the global transfer of power is accompanied by mechanisms of cooperation, predictable rules, respect for national sovereignty, and a reduction in interventionist policies, it could contribute to a more balanced distribution of power. However, if this transition leads merely to intense competition among major powers, strategically important regions such as the Middle East may once again become arenas of proxy conflicts and geopolitical rivalry.

From this perspective, the crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel is part of a broader competition over the future of the global order. This crisis is not only about the relationship among three actors; it is connected to a wider question: will the Middle East continue to be defined within an order whose main rules are largely determined by external powers, or will regional countries and emerging powers play a greater role in shaping their own future?

The true significance of the transition towards a multipolar order lies not merely in increasing the number of powers, but in changing the very concept of power. In today's world, power is not limited to military capability; rather, economy, technology, diplomacy, political legitimacy, and the ability to create sustainable cooperation are also fundamental elements of power.

For this reason, the future of the Middle East will probably not be shaped by the elimination of one power and the complete replacement by another, but rather by a complex balance among various actors. The success of this process will depend on the ability of regional countries and global powers to manage competition, prevent escalation, and establish mechanisms for cooperation.

The Future of the Middle Eastern Order: From Hegemony to Complex Balance

The future of the Middle East is unlikely to involve either a complete return to the previous order or the rapid creation of an entirely new one. A more realistic possibility is the gradual emergence of a complex, multilayered, and multipolar structure in which different powers compete in some areas while cooperating in others.

In such an order, a country may cooperate with one power in the security sphere, maintain extensive economic relations with another, and adopt independent

positions on political issues. This pattern of relations reflects a decline in absolute dependence on a single external power and an increasing effort by regional countries to create greater flexibility in their foreign policies.

However, the transition from a hegemonic order to a multilayered balance will not be without risks. A power vacuum may intensify regional rivalries; competition among major powers may expose smaller countries to conflicting pressures; and the absence of shared security mechanisms may rapidly transform limited crises into broader conflicts.

Therefore, the future of the Middle East will depend on creating a balance among three fundamental elements:

- Regional powers;
- Global powers;
- Collective security institutions and mechanisms.

If one of these elements completely dominates the other two, the likelihood of instability will increase. A stable order becomes possible only when no actor can secure its own security through the permanent insecurity of others.

This issue is particularly significant in relations between Iran and Israel. Both countries perceive themselves as facing serious security threats and both emphasise the necessity of maintaining their deterrence capabilities. However, the expansion of one side's defensive and military capabilities often increases the concerns and reactions of the other side.

This situation represents a clear example of the security dilemma in international relations; a situation in which an action taken by one actor to increase its security may be perceived by another actor as a threat. As a result, a cycle of distrust, military expansion, and security competition emerges.

Resolving this dilemma is only possible through the creation of security arrangements in which the security concerns of all parties are taken into consideration, even under conditions of continuing disagreement. Such arrangements do not necessarily require complete trust or friendly relations; rather, they can be based on a realistic principle: rivals can create shared rules for managing their differences in order to prevent a devastating war, even without becoming friends.

From this perspective, the future of the Middle Eastern order depends less on the absolute dominance of one power and more on the ability of regional and international actors to establish mechanisms that place competition within a

manageable framework and prevent political disagreements from turning into military confrontations.

Accordingly, lasting stability can only be achieved when security is no longer based on the logic of elimination, domination, or unilateral superiority, but instead rests on mutual respect, responsible balance, and acceptance of the reality that no country can secure its own security at the permanent expense of the insecurity of others including Palestinians long term suppression.

From Regional Crisis to a Reconsideration of the Concept of Power

The crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel ultimately brings us back to a fundamental question that has been raised throughout this article: What is power, and when can it be considered successful?

Military power can provide the ability to attack, defend, and impose costs on the opposing side. Economic power can serve as a tool of pressure, sanctions, or the creation of mutual dependence. Political power can build alliances and influence the decisions of other actors. Diplomatic power can manage disputes and prevent crises from turning into broader wars.

However, none of these elements alone can guarantee lasting success.

Power moves closer to achieving sustainable outcomes when it can establish a balance between the ability to exert pressure and the ability to create order. An order based solely on fear, coercion, and military superiority may produce achievements in the short term; however, in the long term, it will usually encounter resistance, distrust, and efforts by other actors to create a balance against it.

For this reason, one of the important lessons of contemporary crises is that military power and political legitimacy cannot be completely separated from one another. Even major powers, in order to preserve a stable order, require not only military capability but also political acceptance, international legitimacy, and the ability to build lasting alliances.

This does not mean ignoring the reality of power. In international relations, power remains one of the fundamental factors shaping the behaviour of states. However, historical experience has shown that power which cannot be transformed into an acceptable political framework will ultimately face serious limitations.

In relations among states, differences in interests are natural. Governments always have different perceptions of security, national interests, and justice. The central issue is not whether all actors can reach a completely shared perspective; rather, it is whether these differences can be managed within a framework where the use of force becomes the last option, not the first instrument for resolving disputes.

Ultimately, a power that is only capable of destruction may achieve operational victories; however, a power that can create arrangements after a crisis to prevent its repetition demonstrates, in a deeper sense, greater political and strategic power.

From this perspective, the future of both the regional and global order depends on whether major powers and regional actors can move away from the logic of absolute domination and towards a form of balance; a balance in which power is accompanied by responsibility, legitimacy, and an understanding of historical and social realities.

The crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel is therefore not merely a regional crisis; rather, it is part of a broader test confronting today's international system: Will the future world be shaped by endless competition for domination, or will different powers be able to create a balanced, manageable, and multipolar order?

The answer to this question remains uncertain. However, one historical reality cannot be ignored: no power, regardless of its size, can define the world order forever solely according to its own capabilities. Powers change, alliances transform, and political orders give way to new structures.

What can endure is not the claim of eternal power, but the ability to create arrangements in which power, legitimacy, and responsibility exist alongside one another.

For this reason, the true responsibility of power is not limited to the ability to win wars. Its primary responsibility is to understand when to use force, when to pursue negotiation, and how to prevent a temporary victory from becoming the beginning of a new cycle of violence.

This may be one of the most important lessons of the crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel:

Power can start a war, but only politics, diplomacy, legitimacy, and responsibility can create lasting peace.

Final Conclusion: From the Middle East Crisis to a Reconsideration of the Concept of Power

The crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel cannot be analysed merely as a military confrontation among three actors. At its deeper level, this crisis is part of a broader transformation in which the concepts of power, security, independence, deterrence, and global order are being redefined.

The developments surrounding this crisis have demonstrated that military power remains one of the most important instruments of international politics; however, military power alone cannot guarantee sustainable political outcomes. The ability to destroy infrastructure, inflict damage, or impose costs on an opponent does not necessarily mean achieving political and strategic objectives.

In contrast, a lasting outcome emerges when military power can be transformed into an order that is political, legitimate, and sustainable. Without such a framework, military victories may become nothing more than temporary pauses in a longer competition.

This crisis has also demonstrated that security is not an absolute or one-sided concept. When one actor expands its military and strategic capabilities in order to increase its own security, the same action may be perceived as a threat by another actor. Under such circumstances, the security of one side can become the insecurity of another, creating a cycle of competition, distrust, and the expansion of military capabilities.

Therefore, sustainable security in the Middle East cannot be based solely on the superiority of one power or the exclusion of another actor from the regional equation. Any security order that ignores the fundamental concerns of some of its participants will remain vulnerable to future crises.

The crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel has also demonstrated that regional issues are deeply interconnected. Iran's nuclear programme, sanctions, the security of the Persian Gulf, the Palestinian issue, the situation in Gaza, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen, although each has its own specific dimensions, are all part of a broader framework of security competition and geopolitical rivalry.

This interconnectedness does not mean that all issues must be resolved in a single negotiation and at the same time. On the contrary, a realistic solution may require

a combination of gradual negotiations, limited agreements, confidence-building mechanisms, and step-by-step security arrangements.

However, none of these efforts can succeed without accepting a fundamental reality: no power can guarantee its own security forever by permanently creating insecurity for others. At the global level, this crisis will not remain by USA as a dominant force in the Middle East, as region is entering a new phase. The United States will not remain as a highly influential power; however, the growing role of China, Russia, and other global and regional actors indicates the gradual movement of the international system towards a more multipolar structure.

This transition may create opportunities for greater independence among regional countries; yet it also carries the risk of renewed competition among major powers. The future of the global order will depend on whether this transition is managed through cooperation, shared rules, and diplomacy, or whether it leads to a new struggle for spheres of influence.

In this context, the opening question of this article once again becomes significant: What is the relationship between humanity and power?

Throughout history, power has often imagined itself to be permanent. Empires, states, and leaders have believed that military strength, wealth, or political influence could secure their position forever; however, history has shown that no power is immune from change.

Powers transform, alliances shift, spheres of influence move, and political orders that once appeared stable eventually undergo transformation.

From this perspective, the central question is not merely who won a particular war or who caused greater damage. The deeper question is whether power has succeeded in becoming a sustainable order or not.

True victory, in a broader strategic sense, is achieved when power can prevent the repetition of crises; create security that is not based solely on fear; and establish an order that possesses at least an acceptable level of legitimacy and political acceptance.

This does not mean ignoring the reality of power. On the contrary, history demonstrates that legitimacy without power may not be capable of defending itself. Yet power without legitimacy will also face resistance and instability in the long term.

Therefore, the central challenge of the future world is finding a balance between power and responsibility.

Power that seeks only domination will eventually encounter resistance. Power that relies solely on coercion will require continuous use of coercion. But power combined with legitimacy, political responsibility, and an understanding of historical and social realities has a greater chance of creating a stable order.

From this perspective, the conflict between Iran, the United States, and Israel is far more than a military event or a regional confrontation. It is part of a broader test facing the international system; a test in which the world confronts fundamental questions about the future of power, the role of states, the limitations of military intervention, and the necessity of diplomacy.

The future of the Middle East will most likely not be shaped by the absolute victory of one power and the absolute defeat of another, but rather through the complex interaction of regional and global powers.

If the future order is built upon exclusion, domination, and coercion, new crises will remain inevitable. However, if major powers and regional actors recognise that sustainable security requires balance, dialogue, and mutual acceptance, the possibility of a more stable order will remain open.

Ultimately, history reminds us that power, regardless of its magnitude, is not greater than time.

Leaders come and go; states rise and collapse; alliances change, and global orders give way to new ones. What ultimately remains is not the claim of eternal power, but the consequences of decisions made by those who possess power during their limited time.

For this reason, the moral responsibility of power is not limited to the ability to win wars. Its true responsibility is to understand when force should be used, when negotiation should be pursued, and how to prevent a temporary victory from becoming the beginning of another cycle of violence.

This may be the most important lesson of the crisis between Iran, the United States, and Israel:

Power can begin a war, but only politics, diplomacy, legitimacy, and responsibility can create lasting peace.

And in a world where the old order is changing and the new order has not yet fully emerged, the future will depend not only on the power of those who can inflict the greatest damage, but also on the wisdom of those who understand how

to limit power, make it responsible, and place it in the service of creating a sustainable order.

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